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A HISTORY OF CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS OF FAITH IN CHRISTENDOM AND BEYOND, WITH HISTORICAL TABLES. WILLIAM A. CURTIS, D.LITT. Charles Scribner's Sons. 1912. Pp. xx, 502.

The purpose of the author is indicated when he says, in his preface, that there is room for a book which shall supply the general reader as well as the scholar with accurate information for an intelligent appreciation of the history and literature of dogma. In his introduction the author tells us, "Undogmatic religion is, strictly speaking, a contradiction in terms. Every religion has enshrined a creed, and in some fashion has given voice to a confession of the faith by which it lives. The intellect and the life of man have their own sacrifice and tribute to offer on the altar of faith." He also tells us in his introduction, "Religion only betrays an instinct which is universal when it gives utterance, in language as august as lips can frame, to its mature convictions." The earliest confessions of faith, possibly the best, our author tells us, were avowals of faith in a Person, not narrowly intellectual. An excellent analysis is given of the origin and purpose of creeds, which may be summarized as follows: (1) Spontaneous utterances of new-found conviction. (2) A natural evolution of the consciousness of the Christian community. As an illustration of this he cites the *Te Deum*, which he very correctly calls a lyric creed. (3) Creeds formed for liturgical use. (4) Those formed for purpose of catechizing professed converts. Among these is placed the Apostles' Creed. (5) For public testimony, not merely before the church but before the world. (6) To make plain the religious belief, so as to remove misconception. For illustration, many of the great Confessions of the Reformation. (7) To settle controversy. (8) To form a bond of union; for example, the Westminster Confession. (9) To secure a standard of orthodoxy either for church members or for church officers.

The author does not confine himself to Christian beliefs but devotes two chapters to Confessions of non-Christian religions. With regard to these it may be said that they are liable to leave a somewhat erroneous impression, because the creed of most heathen religions occupies a relatively small place, and in some cases these Confessions have certainly found expression after and in relation to the Christian religion. The creed of Islam is, like that of the ancient religion of Israel, exceedingly short. To some extent the Hebrews have regarded themselves as having a creedless religion, but the author says, "The true creed of Israel in the Old Testament is, 'Hear, O Israel; Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord, is one.'" But this certainly would not express the sum total of

Israelitish belief in the days of Jesus. And from the days of Philo, as our author shows, there has been a tendency to amplify this creed. The Christian's creed is found to commence with the simple acknowledgment that Jesus is the Christ. Later this is made to include the doctrine of his divinity, which later involves the doctrine of the Trinity. That the Trinitarian formula has justification in the teaching of Paul is easily shown. Professor Curtis takes up and considers with care and with equal clearness the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene, the Creed of Constantinople, of Chalcedon, and the so-called Athanasian Creed. It is very acceptable to find place given, too brief in fact, to the *Gloria* and the *Te Deum*, for the latter especially deserves to rank as perhaps the best creed to which the Church has ever given expression. There is room for difference of opinion concerning the Apostles' Creed, and our author does not always agree with other students of this symbol. But the whole discussion of all these creeds, together with the texts, is illuminating.

We cannot follow in detail the author's treatment of the creeds which found confession in the Greek and Oriental churches, and also those of the churches of the Reformation. His work in these Confessions is done carefully and in a fair, historical spirit. The subject is brought well up to date, in that it includes a summary of beliefs in use in the Salvation Army, and even takes into consideration the tenets which Mrs. Eddy, of Christian Science, submitted to the world's Parliament of Religion in 1893. Of course no discussion is given of these items of supposed belief. Mormonism also presents a creed, consisting of the Thirteen Articles of Joseph Smith, dating from 1840; in which however much that is distinctly Mormon does not appear. Not the least interesting and valuable part of the book is a review of the history of the creeds, their general necessity and value, and the ethical significance of subscription. There is much in the treatment of this last topic which is noteworthy. We can give but one sentence: "Allowance must be made for the element of legitimate compromise inseparable from all great organizations."

On the whole, it is not saying too much when we credit the author with having realized the purpose which he announces in the beginning: "To review with honesty, fairness, and charity the great dogmatic systems of the Christian world, to exhibit their contents without prejudice and distortion, and to glance with sympathy across the Christian boundary at kindred documents beyond, so far as they are known." There are points at which one might depart from Professor Curtis's position. For instance, the relation of the

old Roman creed is not satisfactorily traced. Whether the Apostles' Creed was originally in the East as well as in the West is possible but by no means sure. The introduction of some personal creeds, like that of Tolstoy, for instance, and that of Mrs. Eddy, hardly adds to the dignity of the volume and little to its value. The volume closes with appendices which tabulate the variations in the evolution of the Christian Creeds, and with an index which leaves little to be desired. Without question Professor Curtis has given us a book which, while it does not throw much light on matters critically in dispute, yet makes relatively easy and agreeable an acquisition of the knowledge of the intellectual forms through which the Christian religion has passed. For this, therefore, he places all readers in his debt, and readers, considering the merit of the book, should be many.

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VINCENT DE PAUL, PRIEST AND PHILANTHROPIST. E. K. SANDERS.  
Longmans, Green, & Co. 1913. Pp. xxiv, 419. \$4.00.

Mr. Sanders in his introduction seeks to make plain that Vincent de Paul was first of all a priest and that his motives and ideals were those of his order. He was imbued with the ideas of sanctity which have been characteristic of the Catholic Church. He would have had no sympathy with social service apart from the sanctions of an authoritative and ascetic religion. But in spite of this disclaimer, the reader who follows the story is most attracted and held by the modernness of St. Vincent's methods and points of view. As a priest this man of the seventeenth century may have been like the other good priests of his day, but as a philanthropist he is akin to those of the twentieth century. In a complex character we have a right to choose those elements which have the most significance for our own time.

The significance of St. Vincent de Paul lay in those things upon which he himself may have put least emphasis. Unlike most men of his order, he looked upon poverty not as a means of grace but as a definite evil to be dealt with by organized effort. He was not satisfied with mere almsgiving. He sought to train a body of social workers, who should give themselves with absolute consecration to work for the destitute. His system of relief and of friendly visiting was based on knowledge of actual conditions. He was wonderfully successful in enlisting the wealthy classes in voluntary service, but